mechanisms to facilitate innovation processes. The measures include *Inter-alia*, Patent Facilitation, Establishment of Science & Technology, Entrepreneurship Parks, Technology Business Incubators, Techno-Entrepreneur Promotion Programme (TEPP), Programme Aimed at Technology Self-Reliance (PATSER) and assistance provided by the Technology Development Board for the commercialization of innovative ideas and projects. There are also programmes for supporting grass-root level innovations through the National Innovation Foundation. Taken together, the various programmes offer a comprehensive range of services and facilities for scientific and technological innovations to flourish. Although there is presently no proposal for the formulation of a National Innovation Policy, the Government has taken note of the suggestions made in the news report.

Regulatory Authority for Biotech Agri-Products

771. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether All India Biotech Association has been seeking clarifications from Government about setting up of a regulatory authority for biotech products, Genetically manipulated agri-products, the policy on segregation after genetically manipulated crops commercialised and the kind of labelling requirements necessary; and

(b) if so, the clarifications provided for safeguards against possible hazards of Genetically manipulated agri-products?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT): (a) Sir, the All India Biotech Association has not submitted any formal representation or proposal for setting up of a regulatory authority for biotech agri-products.

(b) Does not arise, in view of the above.

Earthquake tremor in Jabalpur

†772. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the possibility of earthquake tremors likely to occur in Jabalpur, as per the scientific point of view;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) whether there is any scheme to set up any laboratory in Jabalpur under Calamity Management Scheme;

(c) the findings of research carried out by geologists of Italy; and

(d) the measures proposed to reduce destruction from earthquake?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT): (a) Sir, as per the seismic zoning map of the country, published by the Bureau of Indian Standards, Jabalpur falls in Zone-III. According to this classification the region is broadly associated with earthquake of intensity VII on Modified Meracalli scale. However, at present there is no method available anywhere in the world which can predict earthquake occurrence scientifically in terms of space, time and magnitude.

(b) A state-of-art digital seismological observatory is functional at Jabalpur. This observatory is maintained by the Geological Survey of India with the support of Department of Science & Technology.

(c) An Indo-Italian workshop was organised at National Geophysical Research Institute, Hyderabad in the first week of March, 2001 on "Seismic Risk' Evaluation,. As a part of this workshop, a team of Italian scientists accompanied with Indian experts visited Jabalpur areas from 3rd to 5th March, 2001 for on the spot assessment pertaining to microzonation. On the basis of recommendations, microzonation of Jabalpur city has been initiated.

(d) The Bureau of Indian Standards prepares and periodically updates the codes for earthquake resistant construction. The risk of destruction from future earthquakes can be reduced, if these codes are properly followed while constructing the buildings. Also, microzonation studies which have already been initiated for Jabalpur city will enable better planning and preparedness through risk evaluation.

Scientific and industrial cooperation with Russia

773. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India has recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Russia on bilateral scientific and industrial cooperation;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and